CARRISTON'S GIFT.

BY HUGH CONWAY.

PART I.

TOLD BY PHILIP BRAND, M. D., LONDON.

I.

I wish I had the courage to begin this tale by turning to my professional visiting books, and, taking at random any month out of the last twenty years, give its record as a fair sample of my ordinary work. The dismal extract would tell you what a doctor's—I suppose I may say a successful doctor's—lot is, when his practice lies in a poor and densely-populated district of London. Dreary as such a beginning might be, it would perhaps allay some of the incredulity which this tale may probably provoke, as it would plainly show how little room there is for things imaginative or romantic in work so hard as mine, or among such grim realities of poverty, pain, and grief as those by which I have been surrounded. It would certainly make it appear extremely unlikely that I should have found time to imagine, much less to write, a romance or melodrama.

The truth is that when a man has toiled from nine o'clock in the morning until nine o'clock at night, such leisure as he can enjoy is precious to him, especially when even that short respite is liable to be broken in upon at any moment.

Still, in spite of the doleful picture I have drawn of what may be called "the daily grind," I begin this tale with the account of a holiday.

In the autumn of 1884 I turned my back with right good-will upon London streets, hospitals, and patients, and took my seat in the North Express. The first revolution of the wheels sent a thrill of delight through my jaded frame. A joyful sense of freedom came over me. I had really got away at last! Moreover, I had left no address behind me, so for three blessed weeks might roam an undisputed lord of myself. Three weeks were not very many to take out of the fifty-two, but they were all I could venture to give myself; for even at that time my practice, if not so lucrative as I could wish, was a large and increasing one. Having done a twelve-month's hard work, I felt that no one in the kingdom could take his holiday with a conscience clearer that mine, so I lay back in a peculiarly contented frame of mind, and discounted the coming pleasures of my brief respite from labor.

There are many ways of passing a holiday—many places at which it may be spent; but, after all, if you wish to enjoy it thoroughly there is but one royal rule to be followed. That is, simply to please yourself—go where you like, and mount the innocent holiday hobby which is dearest to your heart, let its name be botany, geology, entomology, conchology, venery, piscation, or what not. Then you will be happy, and return well braced up for the battle of life. I knew a city clerk with literary tastes, who invariably spent his annual fortnight among the musiest tomes of the British Museum, and averred that his health was more benefited by so doing than if he had passed the time inhaling the freshest sea-breezes. I daresay he was right in his assertion.

Sketching has always been my favorite holiday pursuit. Poor as my drawings may be, nevertheless, as I turn them over in my portfolio, they bring, to me at least, vivid remembrances of many sweet and picturesque spots, happy days, and congenial companions. It is not for me to say anything of their actual merits, but they are dear to me for their associations.

This particular year I went to North Wales, and made Bettws-y-Coed my headquarters. I stayed at the Royal Oak, that well-known little inn dear to many an artist's heart, and teeming with reminiscences of famous men who have sojourned there times without number. It was here I made the acquaintance of the man with whose life the curious events here told are connected.

On the first day after my arrival at Bettws my appreciation of my liberty was so thorough, my appetite for the enjoyment of the beauties of Nature so keen and insatiable, that I went so far and saw so much, that when I returned to the Royal Oak night had fallen and the hour of dinner had long passed by. I was, when my own meal was placed on the table, the only occupant of the coffee-room. Just then a young man entered, and ordered something to eat. The waiter knowing, no doubt, something of the frank *camaraderie* which exists, or should exist, between the followers of the painter's craft, laid his cover at my table. The new-comer seated himself, gave me a pleasant smile and a nod, and in five minutes we were in full swing of conversation.

The moment my eyes fell upon the young man I had noticed how singularly handsome he was. Charles Carriston—for this I found afterward to be his name—was about twenty-two years of age. He was tall, but slightly built; his whole bearing and figure being remarkably elegant and graceful. He looked even more than gentlemanly,—he looked distinguished. His face was pale, its features well-cut, straight, and regular. His forehead spoke of high intellectual qualities, and there was somewhat of that development over the eyebrows which phrenologists, I believe, consider as evidence of the possession of imagination. The general expression of his face was one of sadness, and its refined beauty was heightened by a pair of soft, dark, dreamy-looking eyes.

It only remains to add that, from his attire, I judged him to be an artist—a professional artist—to the backbone. In the course of conversation I told him how I had classified him. He smiled.

"I am only an amateur," he said; "an idle man, nothing more—and you?"

"Alas! I am a doctor."

"Then we shall not have to answer to each other for our sins in painting."

We talked on pleasantly until our bodily wants were satisfied. Then came that pleasant craving for tobacco, which after a good meal, is natural to a well-regulated digestion.

"Shall we go and smoke outside?" said Carriston. "The night is delicious."

We went out and sat on one of the wooden benches. As my new friend said, the night was delicious. There was scarcely a breath of air moving. The stars and the moon shone brightly, and the rush of the not far distant stream came to us with a soothing murmur. Near us were three or four jovial young artists. They were in merry mood; one of them had that day sold a picture to a tourist. We listened to their banter until, most likely growing thirsty, they re-entered the inn.

Carriston had said little since we had been out of doors. He smoked his cigar placidly and gazed up at the skies. With the white moonlight falling on his strikingly-beautiful face—the graceful pose into which he fell—he seemed to me the embodiment of poetry. He paid no heed to the merry talk of the artists, which so much amused me—indeed, I doubted if he heard their voices.

Yet he must have done so, for as soon as they had left us he came out of his reverie.

"It must be very nice," he said, "to have to make one's living by Art."

"Nice for those who can make livings by it," I answered.

"All can do that who are worth it. The day of neglected genius is gone by. Muller was the last sufferer, I think—and he died young."

"If you are so sanguine, why not try your own luck at it?"

"I would; but unfortunately I am a rich man."

I laughed at this misplaced regret. Then Carriston, in the most simple way, told me a good deal about himself. He was an orphan, an only child. He had already ample means; but Fortune had still favors in store for him. At the death of his uncle, now an aged man, he must succeed to a large estate and a baronetcy. The natural, unaffected way in which he made these confidences, moreover made them not, I knew, from any wish to increase his importance in my eyes, greatly impressed me. By the time we parted for the night I had grown much interested in my new acquaintance—an interest not untinged by envy. Young, handsome, rich, free to come or go, work or play, as he listed! Happy Carriston!

II.

I am disposed to think that never before did a sincere friendship, one which was fated to last unbroken for years, ripen so quickly as that between Carriston and myself. As I now look back I find it hard to associate him with any, even a brief, period of time subsequent to our meeting, during which he was not my bosom friend. I forget whether our meeting at the same picturesque spot on the morning which followed our self-introduction was the result of accident or arrangement. Anyway, we spent the day together, and that day was the precursor of many passed in each other's society. Morning after morning we sallied forth to do our best to transfer the same bits of scenery to our sketching-blocks. Evening after evening we returned to dine side by side, and afterwards to talk and smoke together, indoors or out-doors as the temperature advised or our wishes inclined.

Great friends we soon became—inseparable as long as my short holiday lasted. It was, perhaps, pleasant for each to work in company with an amateur like himself. Each could ask the other's opinion of the merits of the work done, and feel happy at the approval duly given. An artist's standard of excellence is too high for a non-professional. When he praises your work he praises it but as the work of an outsider. You feel that such commendation condemns it and disheartens you.

However, had Carriston cared to do so, I think he might have fearlessly submitted his productions to any conscientious critic. His drawings were immeasurably more artistic and powerful than mine. He had undoubtedly great talent, and I was much surprised to find that good as he was at landscape, he was even better at the figure. He could, with a firm, bold hand, draw rapidly the most marvelous likenesses. So spirited and true were some of the studies he showed me, that I could without flattery advise him, provided he could finish as he began, to keep entirely to the higher branch of the art. I have now before me a series of outline faces drawn by him—many of them from memory; and as I look at them the original of each comes at once before my eyes.

From the first I had been much interested in the young man, and as day by day went by, and the peculiarities of his character were revealed to me, my interest grew deeper and deeper. I flatter myself that I am a keen observer and skilful analyst of personal character, and until now fancied that to write a description of its component parts was an easy matter. Yet when I am put to the proof I find it no simple task to convey in words a proper idea of Charles Carriston's mental organization.

I soon discovered that he was, I may say, afflicted by a peculiarly sensitive nature. Although strong, and apparently in good health, the very changes of the weather seemed to affect him almost to the same extent as they affect a flower. Sweet as his disposition always was, the tone of his mind, his spirits, his conversation, varied, as it were, with the atmosphere. He was full of imagination, always rich, was at times weird, even grotesquely weird. Not for one moment did he seem to doubt the stability of the wild theories he started, or the possibility of the poetical dreams he dreamed being realized. He had his faults, of course; he was hasty and impulsive; indeed to me one of the greatest charms about the boy was that, right or wrong, each word he spoke came straight from his heart.

So far as I could judge, the whole organization of his mind was too highly strung, too finely wrought for every-day use. A note of joy, of sorrow, even of pity vibrated through it too strongly for his comfort or well-being. As yet it had not been called upon to bear the test of love, and fortunately—I use the word advisedly—fortunately he was not, according to the usual significance of the word, a religionism an, or I should have thought it not unlikely that some day he would fall a victim to that religious mania so well known to my professional brethren, and have developed hysteria or melancholia. He might even have fancied himself a messenger sent from heaven for the regeneration of mankind. From natures like Carriston's are prophets made.

In short, I may say that my exhaustive study of my new friend's character resulted in a certain amount of uneasiness as to his future—an uneasiness not entirely free from professional curiosity.

Although the smile came readily and frequently to his lips, the general bent of his disposition was sad, even despondent and morbid. And yet few young men's lives promised to be so pleasant as Charles Carriston's.

I was rallying him one day on his future rank and its responsibilities.

"You will, of course, be disgustingly rich?" I said.

Carriston sighed. "Yes, if I live long enough; but I don't suppose I shall."

"Why in the world shouldn't you? You look pale and thin, but are in capital health. Twelve long miles we have walked to-day—you never turned a hair."

Carriston made no reply. He seemed in deep thought.

"Your friends ought to look after you and get you a wife," I said.

"I have no friends," he said sadly. "No nearer relation than a cousin a good deal older than I am, who looks upon me as one who was born to rob him of what should be his."

"But by the law of primogeniture, so sacred to the upper ten thousand, he must know you are entitled to it."

"Yes; but for years and years I was always going to die. My life was not thought worth six months' purchase. All of a sudden I got well. Ever since then I have seemed, even to myself, a kind of interloper."

"It must be unpleasant to have a man longing for one's death. All the more reason you should marry, and put other lives between him and the title."

"I fancy I shall never marry," said Carriston, looking at me with his soft dark eyes. "You see, a boy who has waited for years expecting to die, doesn't grow up with exactly the same feelings as other people. I don't think I shall ever meet a woman I can care for enough to make my wife. No, I expect my cousin will be Sir Ralph yet."

I tried to laugh him out of his morbid ideas. "Those who live will see," I said. "Only promise to ask me to your wedding, and better still, if you live in town, appoint me your family doctor. It may prove the nucleus of that West End practice which it is the dream of every doctor to establish."

I have already alluded to the strange beauty of Carriston's dark eyes. As soon as companionship commenced between us those eyes became to me, from scientific reasons, objects of curiosity on account of the mysterious expression which at times I detected in them. Often and often they wore a look the like to which, I imagine, is found only in the eyes of a somnambulist—a look which one feels certain is intently fixed upon something, yet upon something beyond the range of one's own vision. During the first two or three days of our new-born intimacy, I found this eccentricity of Carriston's positively startling. When now and then I turned to him, and found him staring with all his might at nothing, my eyes were compelled to follow the direction in which his own were bent. It was at first impossible to divest oneself of the belief that something should be there to justify so fixed a gaze. However, as the rapid growth of our friendly intercourse soon showed me that he was a boy of most ardent poetic temperament—perhaps even more a poet than an artist—I laid at the door of the Muse these absent looks and recurring flights into vacancy.

We were at the Fairy Glen one morning, sketching, to the best of our ability, the swirling stream, the gray rocks, and the overhanging trees, the last just growing brilliant with autumnal tints. So beautiful was everything around that for a long time I worked, lilled, or dreamed in contented silence. Carriston had set up his easel at some little distance from mine. At last I turned to see how his sketch was progressing. He had evidently fallen into one of his brown studies, and, apparently, a harder one than usual. His brush had fallen from his fingers, his features were immovable, and his strange dark eyes were absolutely riveted upon a large rock in front of him, at which he gazed as intently as if his hope of heaven depended upon seeing through it.

He seemed for the while oblivious to things mundane. A party of laughing, chattering, terrible tourist girls scrambled down the rugged steps, and one by one passed in front of him. Neither their presence nor the inquisitive glances they cast on his statuesque face roused him from his fit of abstraction. For a moment I wondered if the boy took opium or some other narcotic on the sly. Full of the thought I rose, crossed over to him, and laid my hand upon his shoulder. As he felt my touch he came to himself, and looked up at me in a dazed, inquiring way.

"Really, Carriston," I said, laughingly, "you must reserve your dreaming fits until we are in places where tourists do not congregate, or you will be thought a madman, or at least a poet."

He made no reply. He turned away from me impatiently, even rudely; then, picking up his brush, went on with his sketch. After a while he seemed to recover from his pettishness, and we spent the remainder of the day as pleasantly as usual.

As we trudged home in the twilight, he said to me in an apologetic, almost penitent way.

"I hope I was not rude to you just now."

"When do you mean?" I asked, having almost forgotten the trivial incident.

"When you woke me from what you called my dreaming."

"Oh dear, no. You were not at all rude. If you had been, it was but the penalty due to my presumption. The flights of genius should be respected, not checked by a material hand."

TO BE CONTINUED.

How the Prince Died.

I have recently had a very interesting interview with an English gentleman who was present in Zululand at the time of the death of the prince imperial, and who knew the young gentleman well, besides being personally acquainted with all the details of the catastrophe, says a writer in the Philadelphia *Telegram*. He was not much impressed by the character and manners of the ill-fated prince himself, describing him to me as a very full-fledged specimen of the most obnoxious type of a fast young Parisian society man. Besides which, he was impressed with an overwhelming idea of his own importance, and insisted always on taking the command of every expedition in which he was included.

The fatal fray in which the unfortunate youth lost his life owed its whole success for the Zulus to the fact of the prince's party being taken by surprise. Everybody ran away on the sudden attack of the savages, and it was owing to a broken girth that the prince failed to make his escape with the others. There were only five Zulus concerned in the attack, and they all belonged to one family—a father, his three sons and a son-in-law. They stripped the body of their victim, leaving nothing behind but a gold locket suspended around his neck, and which the Zulus thought contained a charm.

My informant told me that, for him, the most trying part of the whole business was the interview which the Empress Eugenie insisted upon having with him after he returned to England. She asked the most minute questions about the prince's death, being especially anxious to know if the fatal wounds were not dealt him in front. But, unfortunately, they were all in his back. Then she wanted to be told that he had died fighting for England, and the Englishman was compelled to assure her that such was not the case. "But at least, Mr. X., you can say it was," was the unhappy mother's suggestion. It did not occur to her, poor lady, that an English gentleman has a natural objection to telling lies on any subject whatever.

Trade in Cast-Off Teeth.

A medical statistician estimates that the citizens of the United States are carrying gold to the value of £100,000 in the recesses of what ought to be their teeth. There are no people on the face of the globe who have such bad teeth and who spend so much money upon them as the Americans. No doubt the habit of hurried feeding and the wholesale consumption of sweet dishes have assisted much toward this end. But is it not a mistake to suppose, as says the medical statistician that false teeth set in gold are buried when their owner shuffles off this mortal coil? If this is so in America, it is not so in England, or why the numerous advertisements offering to buy old artificial teeth? The old teeth are not bought to use again, as some nervous people fancy, but simply for the sake of the gold.—*Popular Provider.*

In an agricultural exhibition in San Juan county, New Mexico, thirty-four varieties of grapes were displayed.

SCIENCE FOR DISEASE.

Standing on the Border Land of Medical Discovery.

We are standing to-day on the border-land of a vast unexplored region in the domain of life. It seems to be a region rich in the promises of benefit to man, when after patient toil we shall have learned more of the relationships of these tiny organisms to one another and to higher forms. The richest harvest garnered hitherto in this domain has been the power to understand the cause of certain dread human scourges, and thus to stay their progress.

In the face of threatened epidemics of Asiatic cholera, we stand to-day fully equipped with a knowledge of its nature, which surely enables us to hold it successfully in check. The surgeon can to-day undertake with just confidence of success such operations for the relief of suffering humanity as would have made the hearts of his elder *confreres* stand fairly still. Many of the so-called accidents of maternity have largely lost their vagueness, and with this their power to harm. The great cloud which for so many years has hung low over the heads of the children of tubercular parents has at length begun to roll away. The terrible epidemic scourges of former times no longer haunt the imagination. Man is not in these days a serious seeker for the fountains of perpetual youth, nor may we justly long for earthly immortality. But we now see—dimly, but at last—that we may lay larger claim at least to our allotted threescore years and ten if we can but learn to cope with or to hold at bay those unseen enemies which have robbed us already of far too many lives.

Little by little we are learning that prevention is better than cure, and that prevention is possible in a large number of those diseases which have claimed their victims hitherto unchallenged. People have always taken it as a matter of course that a certain number of persons must sicken and die of such diseases as typhoid fever and diphtheria; but we know to-day that these diseases can be largely limited if only proper care be taken in destroying the waste material from the sick. We know now to just what we must attribute the wide-spread acquirement of tuberculosis, and that proper cleanliness in streets and houses and all assembling places, would greatly curtail the number of its victims.

Still, again, these delvings in the unseen world have brought up at least one shining moral nugget, which, when beaten into words, means something like this: *we must not lay at the door of Providence or fate those evils which we wilfully or ignorantly bring upon ourselves.*—Harper's Magazine.

GREAT GUNS.

How They Are Made and What They Cost.

The forging of the immense guns is a most interesting process. The rifled guns of the present are made by reenforcing the tube with rings and repeated layers of steel called jackets, which are fitted one over the other over the original tube or barrel of the gun. The jackets or hoops must fit as closely to the guns as if forming an integral part of its composition. The only way to get them on is, of course, by heating, and thus enlarging them. When they cool, they fit snugly. It is evident that the exact size of the jacket and ring when heated so that it can be put in its place must be a matter of the nicest mathematical calculation. The coarse powder now used makes such havoc with the rifling of the largest guns that one hundred charges are about all that can be expected from them. The jackets and rings can then be removed, and fitted to another tube.

The various parts of a gun are not put together at Bethlehem, but are sent to Washington, to a department of the Arsenal called the assembling-room, where the tube is rifled, and the gun is finally completed. A steel gun of the largest calibre costs about $100,000. The ordnance of our modern navy is therefore one of the most costly items for which Congress is expected to display a patriotic generosity.—Harper's Weekly.

Poetry and Fact.

"I love all that is beautiful in art and nature," she was saying to her æsthetic admirer. "I revel in the green fields, the babbling brooks, and the little wayside flowers. I feast on the beauties of earth and sky and air; They are my daily life and food, and ——"

"Maudie!" cried out the mother from the kitchen, not knowing that her daughter's beau was in the parlor—"Maudie, what made you go and eat that big dish of potatoes that was left over from dinner? I told you we wanted them warmed for supper. I declare, if your appetite isn't enough to bankrupt your pa!"

Ten Puffs for a Cent.

"Have you ever thought," said the economist to the spendthrift, "that every puff of your cigar represents a certain amount of money blown to the winds? How much did you pay for that big, black roofer?" "Five for a dollar," spendthrift replied. "Well, if you take 200 puffs from it they will cost you at the rate of a mill a puff, or ten puffs for a cent. Look at your wasteful habit in this light, after you have blown that costly cloud of smoke out of your soot-begrimmed mouth, and you cannot longer violate economic law by forever burning up the money that you put into cigars."

The Busy Bee.

There is some reason for calling them the "busy bees." A student of the habits of these sacharine insects says: To make one pound of honey they must visit from 90,000 to 200,000 flowers.

He Had the Last Word.

A bachelor tradesman who has just died in Hamburg adopted a novel method of revenging himself on the woman who once jilted him. In his will he left her a legacy of 12,000 marks, but also indited the following letter which he ordered to be handed to the lady, who is now a widow, with the money: "Madam: Some thirty years ago I was a suitor for your hand in marriage. You refused my offer, and as a consequence my days have been passed in peace and quietness. Now I requite your goodness."

AMUSEMENTS IN BAVARIA.

Quaint Ways in Which the People of That Country Enjoy Themselves.

As to amusement you may trust a Bavarian not to be behind in that, says the National Review. The men meet almost nightly in the different inns and beerhouses, according to their status in the local societies, where they have talk, singing, music, etc., the large glass mugs of beer at their side being constantly replenished. The beer is fortunately light, but the amount drunk is a serious expense, and much more than the men usually can properly afford. Besides these nightly gatherings there are different clubs or societies that meet at certain times at one or other of the inns for an evening's amusement, some of them under the patronage of the priest. In many of them the women join, but the women's chief entertainments are kunkl, or spinning parties, at home, and very cozy and picturesque these spinning parties are.

The great feature in a Bavarian sitting-room is the large porcelain stove that stands out into the room, and that is usually lit from the passage outside. Round this stove a bench runs, making a delightfully warm seat, the back being the porcelain stove. But besides this stove, in the older houses, there is in the wall a hole with a chimney, where a peculiar sort of pine, that burns brightly without sending out sparks, is burned at night for the purpose of light only.

In olden times, when such luxuries as lamps were unthought of, it was often the only means of illumination. Some still use them constantly; others keep them only for festive occasions. A man (generally the wag or story-teller of the party) sits beside it to keep it replenished. The women have their spinning-wheels or knitting, and the men sit in the darker corners; and there are always some to sing songs or tell stories or keep the fun going in some way. One such scene especially occurs to me.

Imagine an old, dark-paneled room. In her armchair close to the stove, in the full light of the blazing pine wood, sits the handsome old hostess, in her picturesque costume, busy with her spinning-wheel. A young woman with a wheel is in an opposite corner.

Three daughters knitting and guests sit in a circle, more or less, the light playing on the varied faces and time-worn furniture as bright firelight alone can. One man has a guitar and two girls sing Tyrolese songs. At last schnapps of different kinds (sort of cheap liqueurs) and delicious coffee, with home-made cake, are handed round, and the evening ends with hearty farewell greeting.

CATHEDRAL ARCHITECTURE.

How the Great Church of Rome Was Built of Butter.

The cathedral is first found to perfection in the thirteenth century, but it is more elaborate in the fourteenth, says the Philadelphia Ledger. The tenth century was an important epoch in the history of cathedrals. It was the general belief at that time that the end of the world was approaching and a falling off in building activity is noticed in consequence. After the beginning of the year 1000 A. D. a general sense of relief is shown in the building of new churches. The erection of a church was a convenient means for the expression of thankfulness. The founding of monasteries, especially of the Cistercian order, led also to this phenomenal activity. An illustration of this progressive spirit is seen in the tower of the Rouen cathedral, which was built of butter. I mean by that that the people of Rouen, by giving up butter in Lent, paid for it from their savings.

The sculpture of cathedrals, which was so exquisitely carried out in the middle ages, contained a means for teaching the bible in days when books were almost unknown. This is well shown in the statues of Christ. At that time it was more than a symbol; it was a sign of the living spirit. Then, too, the cathedral was more than a church and was not merely a religious place. It was the one superlative place in the city—the center of learning and of the community. Our modern churches have deteriorated, as in the early days, to mere places of worship.

A New Yorker paid $2,500 for a brown diamond.

Queen Marguerita of Italy is a devoted student of the Hebrew language and literature.

Between 1535 and 1539 four seperate versions of the bible were put before English readers.

The first complete translation of the bible into English was effected by John Wycliff in 1380.

In the old Roman days the feet of the bride and bridegroom were washed after the wedding ceremony.

The reformed code of Italy forbids girls to marry under 15, but most of them feel the torments of love at 12.

Joseph Jefferson, Jr., is to be married in June to Miss Blanche Bender, an actress.

Standing Bear, the Sioux chief who is lecturing in Chicago, has sent his sons to be educated in Pennsylvania.

A girl in Pittsburg ran away from home because she loved children and wanted to live in a children's hospital.

In the West Indies fireflies are caught in dark rooms and used as lamps by which their captors find the match box.